

REMARKS

Claims 34-39 are currently pending. Claim 34 is amended herein. Reconsideration and allowance of the remaining Claims is respectfully requested.

102 Rejections

Claims 34-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being anticipated by Evans et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,897,424) in view of Yu (U.S. Patent No. 5,435,772). Applicants have reviewed the cited references and respectfully submit that the embodiments of the present invention as set forth in Claims 34-39 are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by Evans et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,897,424) in view of Yu (U.S. Patent No. 5,435,772).

The Examiner is respectfully directed to independent Claim 34 which recites that an embodiment of the present invention is directed to a polishing apparatus comprising:

... a polishing platen the polishing platen having a central region and a peripheral region, the central region having a first front surface and the peripheral region having a second front surface;... a carrier overlying the polishing pad, wherein the polishing platen is further characterized as having a tapered region, and wherein at least a portion of said second front surface of said peripheral region of the polishing pad overlies the tapered region.

Claims 35-39 depend from independent Claim 34 and recite further features of the claimed invention.

Evans et al. does not anticipate or render obvious a polishing apparatus that includes a polishing platen, a polishing pad overlying the polishing platen and a carrier overlying the polishing pad wherein the polishing platen has “a central region and a peripheral region, the central region having a first front surface and the peripheral region having a second front surface” and is characterized by a “a tapered region ... wherein at least a portion of said second

front surface of said peripheral region of the polishing pad overlies the tapered region.” Evans only shows a renewable polishing lap.

Nowhere in the Evans et al. reference is there shown or suggested a polishing apparatus that includes both a carrier overlying a polishing pad and a polishing platen that has a tapered region that is overlain by at least a portion of said second front surface of a peripheral region of a polishing pad as is recited in Claim 34 (see Figure 6).

Yu does not teach or suggest a modification of Evans et al. that would remedy the deficiencies of Evans et al. noted above. More specifically, Yu does not teach or suggest a polishing apparatus that includes a polishing platen, a polishing pad overlying the polishing platen and a carrier overlying the polishing pad wherein the polishing platen has “a central region and a peripheral region, the central region having a first front surface and the peripheral region having a second front surface” and is characterized by a “a tapered region...wherein at least a portion of said second front surface of said peripheral region of the polishing pad overlies the tapered region.” Yu only shows a dissimilar method of polishing a semiconductor substrate.

It is important to note that Yu does disclose a platen 14 (see column 3 in several locations) but the platen that is disclosed does not include a tapered portion. In fact, nowhere in the Yu reference is there shown or suggested a polishing apparatus that includes both: (1) a carrier overlying a polishing pad and (2) a polishing platen that has a tapered region that is overlain by at least a portion of a second front surface of a peripheral region of a polishing pad as is recited in Claim 34.

In fact, nowhere in the Yu reference is there shown or suggested a polishing apparatus that includes both a carrier overlying a polishing pad and a polishing platen that has a tapered region that is overlain by at least a portion of said second front surface of a peripheral region of a polishing pad (that incidentally is also tapered - see Figure 6) as is recited in Claim 34.

Therefore, even if Evans et al. and Yu are combined as is suggested in the outstanding Office Action, the Applicants' invention would nevertheless not be obtained by the combination. The Examiner is reminded that to render a claim obvious, all of the claim elements must be taught or suggested by the combination of references used in the rejection of the claim. As outlined above this is clearly not the case as it regards the Evans et al. and Yu combination. Consequently, the embodiments of the Applicants' invention as are set forth in Claims 34-39 are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by Evans et al. and Yu, either alone or in combination.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Yu does not anticipate or render obvious the present Claimed invention as is recited in independent Claim 34 and as such Claim 34 overcomes the Examiners basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 34 is in condition for allowance. In addition, Yu does not anticipate or render obvious the present invention as is recited in Claims 35-39 which depend from independent Claim 34, and that Claims 35-39 are in condition for allowance as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

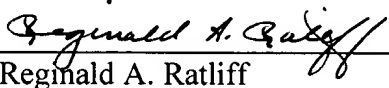
Conclusion

In light of the above-listed amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the remaining Claims.

The Examiner is urged to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,
WAGNER, MURABITO & HAO LLP

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Reginald A. Ratliff
Registration No. 48,098
Two North Market Street
Third Floor
San Jose, CA 95113
(408) 938-9060